

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-30 (cancelled)

31. (currently amended) Apparatus for heat sealing a pack comprising a first pack member formed of sheet of material including a substantially planar part with a plurality of formations depending therefrom each providing an open-topped receptacle, and a substantially planar second pack member for sealing to the first pack member to close and seal the receptacles, the apparatus including:

a base comprising a support member including a substantially planar part for supporting the substantially planar part of the sheet material of the first pack member and a plurality of pockets in the planar part of the support member for receiving the formations of the sheet material of the first pack member;

a lid hinged to the base and including a substantially planar contact face for contacting the substantially planar second pack member to sandwich the first and second pack members between the base and the lid;

electric heating means adapted to heat only selected areas of contact between the first and second pack members to seal the first and second pack members together in the selected areas to thereby close and seal the receptacles in the first pack member;

catch means including engageable latch members on the base and lid for holding the lid and the base firmly together in the closed position;

a switch for closing to cause electric current to flow through the heating means, the switch closing automatically when the lid is brought into its closed position; and

a controller for controlling the flow of electric current in dependence on a temperature feedback signal;

wherein the heating means comprises a heating element of etched foil encased in silicone rubber attached to a surface of the substantially planar part of the support member of the base or to a surface of the substantially planar contact face of the

lid, and wherein the heating element traces a path over the surface of the substantially planar part or over the surface of the substantially planar contact face such that it substantially encircles each of the plurality of pockets in the planar part of the support member of the base when the base and the lid are hinged together to thereby provide heating in the selected areas of contact between the first and second pack members.

32-36 (canceled)

37. (previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 31 wherein the lid of the apparatus is hinged to the base such that it may be moved between an open and a closed position and in the open position, the lid is spaced from the base such that the first pack member may be placed onto the base.

38. (previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 37 wherein in the closed position the lid and the base may sandwich first and second pack members therebetween, the second pack member contacting the upper face of the first pack member, thus defining the contact area between the first and second pack members.

39-45 (canceled)

46. (previously presented) Apparatus according to claim 31 wherein the heating means is adapted to heat the selected contact areas to a temperature of at least 100°C.

47-60 (canceled)